THE problem of helping foreigners, who come to this country equipped with a knowledge of some handicraft, to apply their knowledge so as to afford them a means of livelihood, is a serious one, to be solved only by experiment. In New York, Russian and Italian women are given a chance to make lace, which is sold for them by a group of American women. In Chicago one of the most successful experiments was started four years ago at Hull-House along the lines of spinning and weaving. The preparation of flax, from hetcheling to spinning, is done by women who have learned it in childhood and show a naïve delight in proving themselves mistresses of this ancient and time-honored craft. I found women of several nationalities at work in a large room truly remarkable for its beautiful collection of tools and materials gathered from all over the world—distaffs and spindles, wheels and reels and looms. Every Saturday evening a demonstration is made of the various methods of spinning and weaving to be found among the nationalities living near Hull-House. These are arranged, as far as possible, in historic sequence, so that while an Italian woman works with the most primitive stick spindle, her Russian neighbor goes a step further by sitting on a frame which changes the position of the distaff. A Greek and a Syrian have similar stick spindles. The thread which these women spin is at once used by the weavers.

The earliest spinning by wheel is illustrated by a Syrian wheel, which originally belonged to the grandmother of a Syrian woman who sent back to her native country for it, and presented it to the museum. There are also wheels used in Ireland, Holland and our own New England colonies—and photographs illustrating many pieces of hand machinery too large to be exhibited. There are beautiful specimens of silk, cotton, wool and flax, in all the various processes, and samples of weaving from all over the world. The room itself is an inspiration to anyone interested in handicrafts.

Five looms, one run by electricity, are in use, and the weavers are proud of the fact that they are sup-
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plied with warp and in most cases with woof prepared by the spinners. Most of the finished work is sold, often before the piece is completed. A Danish woman does beautiful figured goods of colored and white linen on a loom brought from her own country. One of the five is a massive American loom such as our grandmothers had built into the walls of their houses, the timbers being six inches square and at least seven feet high. The parts are all made by hand, the great batten swings from a timber that looks as if it had been hewn out, without any finishing touches from the plane, yet this loom produces really exquisite work. One of the most interesting of the looms in use, called the "fly shuttle" loom, illustrates an intermediate step between hand and machine work. Although at Hull-House the most delicate and beautiful work is entirely done by hand, yet this particular loom, generally used for rag carpets, is very interesting. In it, the shuttle instead of being thrown by hand, is shot across by means of a spring which is released by pressing a lever with the foot. Ordinary rag carpet is limited in width by the distance to which the shuttle can be thrown by hand, generally thirty-six inches or less, but in this loom the goods can be made as wide as the frame allows.

The few mechanical devices used in this loom make it seem as far in advance of the primitive looms as the first locomotive might have seemed compared with a wagon, yet the ones now in use in factories are, of course, as much ahead of this as a fully-equipped modern railroad train is ahead of the first locomotive.

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After some six or seven years passed in the energetic advocating of thorough training in practical handicrafts as an essential part of the education of every boy and girl, it is with a sense of marked gratification that The Craftsman publishes in this issue some admirable examples of craftsmanship which have been sent us from the Department of Manual Training in the Public Schools of Rochester, New York, to show what is being done by school boys in making actual furniture of good design and sound construction along lines that are closely related to the Craftsman models. The work is of such a high grade that it serves better than any argument to demonstrate the possibility of mental development through the medium of creative work. It is now quite a number of years since the first forms of manual training were introduced into our public schools, and when we remember the theoretical and dilettante character of many of these early efforts at sloyd, basketry and the making of utterly trivial and superfluous articles, we begin to realize what a long stride has been taken in the right direction toward the development of really valuable training of the hands. Work that produces this sort of thing is not play, but training of a kind that will enable any boy to face the world with a solid foundation of useful knowledge upon which to build his career as a worker.

The articles illustrated here are not playthings, but practical and useful, as well as beautiful, pieces of furniture that could either be used to excellent advantage in helping to furnish a school room or club rooms, or in furnishing